

WE SHOULD NOT SUBSIDIZE AN INDUSTRY THAT OVERCHARGES AMERICAN CONSUMERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, because of my commitment to expanding international trade, I voted in favor of H.R. 4986 in committee. I must say that I was forced to cast that vote under very strange circumstances, with very limited information about the full content of this bill because of the way it was brought up. Because of the secrecy surrounding this bill and the deceit surrounding it, I am reconsidering that vote and will expand on the concerns that I just expressed in the discussion with my colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. STARK). On pharmaceuticals, I question why it could possibly be right to subsidize an industry that overcharges American customers and sells the very same product made in America in other parts of the world for less. Why should there be a subsidy designed to encourage lower prices for seniors in other parts of the world for American pharmaceuticals than right here at home? The high cost of prescription drugs represents an injury to American consumers, but it really does add insult to injury to reward pharmaceutical companies with a tax break with reference to those foreign sales in addition to the gouging of the American consumer.

It is very important for our colleagues to understand that H.R. 4986, which will be coming up for a vote later today, was considered under the most extraordinary and unusual circumstances before the Committee on Ways and Means. There was no public hearing. There was no report that has yet been published. There was even an attempt to limit the ability of the members of the committee to ask questions to any resource witnesses about the nature of this bill. The lead official for the administration on this, Secretary Eizenstat, was rushed out of the committee before he could answer a single question about the bill. Highly unusual that an administration official would be unwilling to publicly answer questions about a bill that will cost American taxpayers \$4 billion to \$6 billion each year. Apparently the entire process for putting this bill together was to gather in a room outside of public purview those people who would benefit, like the pharmaceutical industry, from the tax break and work with them to figure out how they could get the most tax break without any input from anyone other than those who stood to gain from the tax subsidy.

It is particularly ironic that we would be taking this bill up today, because we have just had released this

morning a new study concerning the very highly addictive quality of nicotine; that it takes a child a very short period of time of being exposed to a cigarette before they become addicted to nicotine. Yet one of the principal beneficiaries of this piece of legislation are the giant tobacco companies. They are involved in a worldwide effort to spread the plague of death and disease associated with tobacco use. We have learned today that tobacco is even more addictive than previously known for children.

Phillip Morris, for example, runs these ads all the time, they are spending millions of dollars to tell us how they do not put their logos on clothing; they do not sponsor youth-oriented activities; they do not try to attract children to smoke in the United States. While such claims are very questionable even here at home, none of them apply abroad. Phillip Morris is directly targeting the world's children, as are other tobacco companies.

Under this piece of legislation, the American taxpayer will be an unwilling accomplice of this attempt to addict children around the world. The tobacco industry, if this bill is passed, will get at least \$100 million every year in special tax breaks for the purpose of allowing it to go around and do the same thing to children in other parts of the world, particularly in the developing countries, that it has done to our children. Nor does the American tobacco industry need a special tax break in order to enjoy a competitive advantage. Big tobacco companies have already gained extensive experience as they abused American children, as they successfully addicted millions of American children who grew up to die of emphysema and lung cancer and heart problems as a result of their exposure to tobacco.

Big tobacco has the tremendous marketing expertise, paid for with millions of lives in this country, to apply to Eastern Europe, to Asia, to Africa, to South America, to addict the children in that part of the world. And, as I indicated, they have specifically refused to apply any of the very modest limitations on marketing to children that they now apply in this country to their efforts to addict children around the world.

Why should we reward this malicious industry with \$100 million a year tax cut? That is what the members of this Congress will have to answer this afternoon when this bill comes up.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 59 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. QUINN) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

Sister Catherine Moran, O.P., New Community Corporation, Newark, New Jersey, offered the following prayer:

Lord God,

As Members of the House of Representatives meet today, give this Nation the strength and wisdom to follow Your way.

By Your gentle prodding, Lord, help those elected to public office to act on the promises made to those who rely on them.

By loosening the bonds that have held Your people in the past, may this body give service to all.

In deliberating and making decisions, may the poor and the oppressed never be forgotten.

With Your guidance, Lord, may Your servants be instrumental in fashioning a better tomorrow for all.

We ask Your blessing on the work of this Congress and we thank You for Your presence among us.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. PAYNE led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOME AND CONGRATULATIONS TO SISTER CATHERINE MORAN

(Mr. PAYNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, on this historic occasion it is with great pride that I welcome the guest chaplain to the United States House of Representatives, the first Roman Catholic nun, and the first nonordained woman to offer the opening prayer, Sister Catherine Moran. Sister Catherine Moran is well known and widely admired in my hometown of Newark, New Jersey, where she lives and has made a great difference in our community with her